

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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R 241227Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8966

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

UNCLAS LAGOS 3788

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, OVIP (SANDS, JOHN)

SUBJ: MAJOR EXPORT PROJECTS: VISIT OF JOHN SANDS

REF: STATE 085782

1. IN COURSE HIS 3 DAY VISIT MR. SANDS, DIRECTOR OF MAJOR EXPORT PRODUCTS DIVISION IN COMMERCE, REVIEWED WITH EMBASSY ECON/COMML OFFICERS STATUS OF FMG'S MAJOR PROJECTS IN LNG, REFINERIES, PETROCHEMICALS, IRON AND STEEL, RAILWAYS, FERTILIZER, CONSTRUCTION. HE DISCUSSED ASPECTS OF NIGERIAN SITUATION WITH USAID DIRECTOR PAO, CLARK BATCHELDER OF VISITING OPIC TEAM, AND HAD MEETINGS WITH CHARGE.

2. SANDS ALSO SAT IN ON MEETINGS WITH ARTHUR MCKEE REPRESENTATIVES WITH OFFICIALS OF NIGERIA STEEL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; MET WITH LAGOS REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER WHEELER; VICE PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; AND WAS GUEST AT LUNCH THAT NIGERIAN BUSINESSMAN CHIEF ASHAMU HOSTED FOR VISITING DUPONUM. APPOINTMENTS THAT EMBASSY REQUESTED WITH PERM SEC'S ASIODU (MINES AND POWER), EBONG (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CIROMA (INDUSTRIES) DID NOT MATERIALIZE BECAUSE LAST NAMED OUT OF LAGOS AND FIRST TWO PLEADED ALREADY OVER-CRODED SCHEDULES.

3. IN HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH SOURCES OUTSIDE EMBASSY SANDS FOUND GREATER INTEREST FOR MEPD TYPE OF PROMOTION IN ANBOF IRON AND STEEL, WHERE FMG APPARENTLY CONCERNED TO MOVE ON DIRECT REDUCTION FACILITIES, AND GENERAL CONSTRUCTION, WHERE
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NIGERIANS IN PARTICULAR COMMENTED ON AMBITIOUS PROJECTS

EMBODIED IN THIRD PLAN AND DESIRABILITY HAVING SELECTION OF
MAJR U.S. FIRMS ESTABLISHED HERE ON CONTINUING BASIS. WITH
RESPECT TO LWG, PREVAILING SENTIMENT SEEMED TO BE THAT ALTHOUGH
PROMOTION WOULD SERVE USEFUL EDUCATIONVAL PURPOSE, MOST U.S.
FIRMS WITH CAPABILITIES THIS FIELD HAS HAD ALREADY BEEN IN TOUCH
WITH PROPOSED TECHNICAL PARTNERS AND FMG AND THERE WERE QUESTIONS
WHETHER SPECIAL PROMOTION WOULD ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO WHAT THOSE
FIRMS ALREADY DOING ON THEIR OWN. DISCUSSION OF STATUS
PETROCHEMICAL, FERTILIZER AND OTHER OIL AND GAS RELATED PROJECTS
THAT ARE RESPONSIBILITY OF MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIES FOCUSSED ON FACT
THAT MININD DECISION MAKING APPEARS TO THE INHIBITED BY NEED TO
AWAIT MINISTRY OF MINES AND POWER DECISIONS ABOUT UTILIZATION
NATURAL GAS.

4. SANDS PLEASED WITH INFORMATION AND IDEAS DEVELOPED IN
LAGOS VISIT AND WILL PURSE FURTHER UPON HIS RETURN TO
WASHINGTON.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY PLEASED TO SUPPORT WHATEVER PROMOTION
MEPD MAY DECIDE UPON BUT URGES SPECIAL ATTENTION TO QUESTION
OF TIMING. THERE WILL BE SUBSTANTIAL TURNOVER EMBASSY
ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICERS IN JULY, AUGUST IS HOLIDAY MONTH,
AND FROM ABOUT SEPTEMBER ONWARDS LAGOS WILL BE PREOCCUPIED
WITH BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL (STILL SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 1975).
FROM POINT OF VIEW LOCAL LOGISTICS, LATE JUNE OR EARLY JULY
PROBABLY BEST TIMING.
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